



**USAID | MACEDONIA**  
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## PRESS RELEASE

### **USAID and the Municipality of Kocani initiate a successful plastic recycling program**

On December 19, 2007, the USAID Plastic Recycling Project signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Municipality of Kocani for the implementation of its plastic waste collection program. USAID has allocated \$30,000 to the Municipality for the construction of "ecological islands" where residents can dispose of plastic waste. The program also includes a comprehensive public awareness campaign to educate youth on the importance of plastic recycling.

"This project not only helps local governments to take care of the natural environment, it also propels the establishment of recycling as a viable business in Macedonia," said the U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission Tom Navratil at the MOU ceremony. "I applaud the Municipality of Kocani for its leadership and foresight. It's wise and appropriate that this project will also educate youth on recycling – they are the future and the hope of this country," said Navratil.

The approach of the Plastic Recycling Project is two-prong – to establish a system of collecting, transporting, processing, marketing and selling PET recyclable waste, and to build partnerships between all stakeholders in the process of reducing plastic waste. The program emphasizes the importance of the general public in establishing viable plastic collection mechanisms. It focuses on youth as the most effective channel in communicating the message to a wider audience. The awareness campaign includes school presentations, video presentations on PET recycling, posters, flyers and the creation of school recycling clubs.

Kocani is one of four pilot municipalities that launched plastic recycling campaigns in 2007. The interest and positive feedback from mayors across the country has been impressive, and the project plans to expand to eight more municipalities next year.

#### **NOTE TO EDITORS:**

The American people, through USAID, have invested nearly \$500 million in Macedonia since 1993. USAID is implementing projects that create jobs, reduce corruption and prepare Macedonian students for the workforce. These initiatives improve the quality of life and support Macedonia's transition to a stable and prosperous democracy. USAID provides economic and humanitarian assistance in more than 100 countries. For more information please visit <http://macedonia.usaid.gov>.